

July 2, 2005

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The Advisor

Official Weekly Command Information Report for the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq

Women of the Iraqi Army

For the first time in history, they are allowed to wear the uniform of their country's armed forces. They serve because of patriotism and 'Because I can.'

July 2, 2005

MNSTC-I

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Cover: An Iraqi female military police officer stands guard outside Iraq's Ministry of Defense. Other female MPs are on duty at other ministries and base entry check points.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Rumsfeld, Myers call on Americans for support

By U.S. Army Sgt. Sara Wood

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – In anticipation of upcoming Independence Day celebrations, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and Joint Chiefs Chairman Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers asked for support of the troops and expressed confidence in the American people's spirit during a Pentagon town hall meeting June 29.

This was the first time the town hall meeting involved worldwide participation, taking questions from service members and civilians live at the Pentagon session and via the Web from other parts of the world.



Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld addresses the audience during a worldwide Town Hall meeting at the Pentagon, June 29.
Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen

The negative perception of operations in Iraq that comes from the media is not an accurate depiction of the situation there, Rumsfeld said. In fact, significant progress is being made, and Afghanistan and Iraq have hopeful futures, he added. The legitimacy and value of the missions in these countries, although they may be doubted now, will be proven over time by what Rumsfeld called the "inner gyroscope" of the American people, he said.

"We have staked everything on the idea that people, given sufficient information, ... will find their way to reasonably right decisions over time," he said. "They may move off for a period of time, but they'll come back. And I guess all we can do - all you can do,

all I can do - is to continually look for people who will stand up and tell the truth, who will be willing to defend people who deserve to be defended, criticize people who deserve to be criticized, and to constantly try to get our eyes up off our shoelaces and look out on the horizon on things that are important and lasting, as opposed to being swept away by the emotion of the moment."

Judging a conflict by a certain moment's circumstances is dangerous, Rumsfeld said, and leads to unbalanced conclusions that are proven wrong when the conflict is viewed in the context of history.

"Balanced assessments certainly re-

quire time, they require patience and they require perspective," he said.

With the approaching 4th of July holiday, it is important for service members to hear messages of support not only from their senior leaders, but also from American citizens who appreciate the work they are doing, Myers said.

To get ideas on how to support the troops, people can visit DoD's "America Supports You" web site, Rumsfeld said. America Supports You is a nationwide program launched by DoD to recognize citizen support for the nation's military men and women and to communicate that support to members of the armed forces at home and abroad.

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.' You must do the thing you think you cannot do." *Eleanor Roosevelt (1884 - 1962)*

Iraqi female MPs proud to serve

By U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell
MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – They come from a variety of backgrounds: Sunni, Shi'ia, Kurdish; housewife, student, hair dresser, secretary; married with children, single, and divorced.

Together, they form the Iraqi Army's first unit of women soldiers – officially, the 2nd Female Iraqi Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion. A year after an initial class of recruits graduated from the first training course in Jordan, the company now totals 68.

"We were expecting 40 at the first course, but only 11 attended," said the unit's commander, through an interpreter. For security reasons, she and others interviewed asked that their names not be used. The commander, a 31-year-old major, assumes the others did not show up because they were afraid or their families urged them not to. "The security was bad and this was new for them."

A second training course, however, drew 38 women; a third, the same amount. The number fluctuates, the commander said, as women either discover army life isn't for them or insurgent attacks leave them too shaken to continue. Some have left the unit under pressure from their

families, but later returned, she added.

The unit is based at a former air field in Baghdad, which has been attacked at least a dozen times in the past year, the commander said. An April siege, which was successfully suppressed by both the men and women who serve at the base, left several women injured – two of whom lost limbs, she said. Two other women recov-



At the entry check point, a female Iraqi MP checks the identification card of a visitor.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell



A female Iraqi MP assists in searching the engine compartment of a vehicle entering the base.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

ered from their injuries and returned to duty, the commander added.

The women work at the base entry security check point, searching vehicles and female visitors; they perform similar duties at Iraq's various ministry headquarters or government offices in Baghdad. Unlike male Iraqi soldiers, the women do not live on base. They travel to it daily in civilian clothes, change into their uniforms when they arrive, and then change back into civilian clothes for the trip home.

"Every day when I come here, I wonder if I will get back home," said the commander, who travels anywhere from 30 minutes to one hour to get to the base, depending on traffic and road security. She has been threatened numerous times; most recently, a week ago when a man and a woman each left death threats on her cellular telephone voice mail.

She resolves to continue her work.

"I chose this and I knew what to expect," she said.

Their male counterparts in the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police Service are threatened as well. But being a woman makes it worse for them, they believe. Most keep their service a secret, except for family members.

"It's very difficult," said the unit's deputy commander, a 22-year-old captain, referring to the secrecy. "I want to declare it to all the people."

In the course of performing their duties, the women often take Iraqi citizens off guard. The commander recalled assisting with a mission on the once-notorious Haifa Street, a

See 'Female MP'

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Female MP

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former insurgent stronghold.

"The people there thought I was an American soldier, until I started talking," she said, laughing. "They were quite shocked."

Collectively, the women see themselves as just one slice of everything new in Iraq. Their reasons for joining the Iraqi Army have more to do with a desire to help build and defend a democratic society than a need for a paycheck.

"I like my country, and this is new for women to be in the Army," said a 26-year-old first lieutenant, through an interpreter. "As I started training, my feelings became stronger."

The lieutenant held a weapon for the first time ever during her training in Jordan last year. Marksmanship classes with the AK-47 assault rifle were her favorite part of the training, she said.



A female Iraqi MP secures a visitor's cellular telephone as part of her duties at the entry check point of the base.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Along with marksmanship and weapons familiarization, the basic training also included topics such as physical education, map reading, leadership, military law, first aid, check point operations, and lectures on democracy.

The women are hopeful they'll continue to have more training in the future, and that more jobs will open up to them in the Army. The Ministry of Defense recently started officer training courses at the base; the second class graduated last week. An MOD training official, Iraqi Lt. Col. Mazim, said officials are working on doing more training in Iraq, rather than Jordan. They are also looking for more space for the female MPs, he said.

"This is the first time for this, it's good," said Mazim, who has served in the Iraqi Army for 20 years. "There is a place for women in the Army, but not out fighting with the men."

The majority of the women received unanimous support from their family when they joined the Army. One, a 34-year-old deputy officer, said her mother and sister were so supportive, they helped her fill out the paperwork. Some have fathers, brothers, uncles and husbands who either serve now, or have in the past.

For one staff sergeant, the decision to serve was costly. She walked away from a lucrative job as a professional ath-

lete. Her husband was so against it that he divorced her, she said. Her mother is now helping her take care of her two young children.

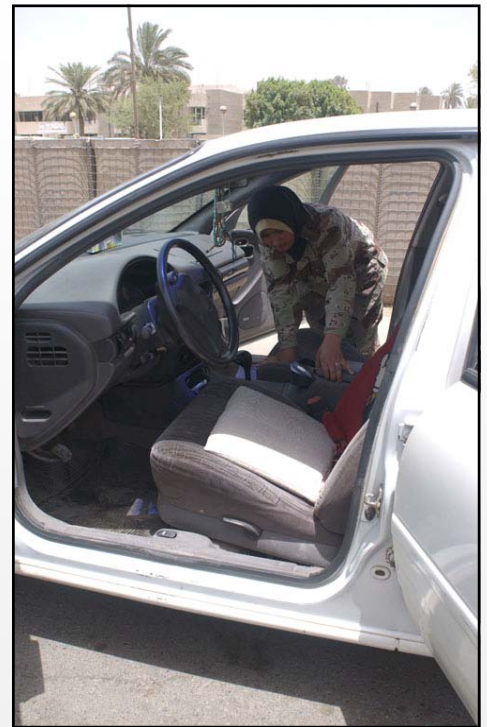
"At the time, it was very difficult," she said of the divorce. "But it's getting better. I love my country. When I'm in uniform, I feel better. I will wear the uniform forever, en shalla. (God willing)"

Some worry that the new government will decide against women serving in the Iraqi Army.

"We lost ourselves with the old regime, we suffered so much," said the former athlete. "I'm not ready to lose this. I feel like I have found myself."

For the most part, the commander believes her unit is close-knit. There are normal problems, like complaints about fairness when duty rosters are posted, but she believes it's common in any unit. When two women had birthdays on the same day recently, the others came together to throw a small party.

"Everyone gets along, ethnicity doesn't matter," said a 29-year-old second lieutenant, a former massage therapist. "It's like a family. We make a good team."



Searching vehicles is one of the duties female Iraqi MPs perform.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell



Officers in the Iraqi female MP company confer in their operations office. The company occupies a portion of a building at a former air field in Baghdad.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Training the Iraqi Army for future challenges

By U.S. Army Sgt. Jennifer J. Eidson

22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BALAD, Iraq – Coalition Soldiers are working around the clock to make sure their Iraqi counterparts are ready and capable of protecting Iraq and its citizens.

U.S. Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry are helping the Iraqi soldiers transition into overseeing the missions being conducted in their area of operations.

At the Iraqi Army training facility at Forward Operating Base O’Ryan, the Iraqi soldiers are taught how to set up traffic control points, identify improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, conduct personnel searches, and distinguish between insurgents and civilians and how to react to enemy contact.

Task Force 1-128 Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, Wisconsin Army National Guard and Troop K, 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard are conducting the training.

The Iraqi Army soldiers are doing well with their training said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Macullouch, an instructor with Troop K.

“I don’t feel that they will have any problems taking over the area,” Macullouch said. “We have spent a lot of hours with these guys.”

The Iraqi Army is young, but with the proper training, they will grow into an army capable of defending their own country, he said.

“Their soldiers are kind of like a fledgling eagle and we are representative of a full grown eagle that represents freedom,” he said. “We have to take them under our wing right now and teach them how to protect this country in the same manor that we would protect it.”

U.S. Army Sergeant Chad Stellpflug, Company C, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, said the instructors try to develop a small group of trainees at a time, in hopes that they will be more effective when joining a larger unit.

“If you have four squared-away squads, then you are going to have a squared-away platoon,” Stellpflug said. “So we break down the training. We start small and work big. It takes a little bit [of work], but if you get them squared away, they are going be tough.”

U.S. Army Sergeant Shaun Dekok, a medical sergeant and instructor with 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, said they push the soldiers in order to make sure they are prepared to face whatever obstacles that might come before them when the Task Force Liberty Soldiers return home.

“When the [Coalition forces] leave Iraq, not all of the country’s problems will be solved and we want to make sure they are ready when the time comes,” Dekok said.

An Iraqi first lieutenant, 4th Platoon, 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, said he feels his men have become well-rounded soldiers and will be able to conduct the task at hand thanks to the Coalition Soldiers who are training them.

“As an Iraqi Army officer, I hope that all the Iraqi Army gets trained by the Coalition forces,” he said. “They train us very well.”

He said the improvement in the Iraqi Security Force’s abilities can be seen through the reducing numbers of Iraqi service members who have been killed in action.



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Brian VanNote (center), Troop K, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, briefs an Iraqi squad leader on their current mission.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel W. Bailey

“[Because of] the training that we receive, we can say that we are prepared and can manage the whole thing after the (Coalition Forces) leave Iraq,” he said. “We got trained well and we became more progressed and more developed. We have reduced our losses to the minimum level.”

U.S. Army Sgt. Matthew W. Kuhnert, an Iraqi Army instructor with Company A, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment and a native of Columbus, Wis., agrees with the Iraqi lieutenant about the Iraqi soldiers’ improvement since they began working together.

“We have come a long way with them as far as doctrine, training them how to react as a group, think as a group, work as a team ... all those things come down to discipline,” Kuhnert said. “We are just teaching these guys how to function as a team and look out for each other, so that on the battlefield, they function as a team.”

Stellpflug said the job they do with the Iraqi soldiers is a vital step in the country’s ability to stand on its own.

“This training is important for Iraq as a whole,” Stellpflug said. “It shows a lot of character in the guys. When we first got here the [Iraqi Army] soldiers were afraid to even put the uniform on. Now, they are coming together as a whole. More and more Iraqis are ready to take the challenge and [this training plays] a vital role in getting Iraq stable.”



An Iraqi gunner mounted on top of a 2nd Motorized Transportation Regiment truck unloads a belt of automatic machine gun rounds on an unsuspecting range target during the convoy live-fire exercise outside the Iraqi base at An Numaniyah.

Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Jerome Bishop

By U.S. Army Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM Public Affairs Office

AN NUMANIYAH, Iraq – Soldiers of the 2nd Iraqi Motorized Transportation Regiment recently took part in their first convoy live-fire exercise at a range outside the Iraqi base at An Numaniyah.

The exercise was developed and implemented by the 2nd Iraqi MTR's U.S. military training team from the 122nd Corps Support Group, 1st U.S. Corps Support Command.

"Each company is coming through and they have two days on the convoy live-fire range," said U.S. Army Maj. David Ling, an operations and plans officer from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 122nd CSG. "They had a con-



The passenger of a 2nd Motorized Transportation Regiment truck receives a new magazine of AK-47 ammunition from a range safety officer during the convoy live-fire exercise.

Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Jerome Bishop

Iraqi transportation unit conducts "live" convoy exercise

voy brief; they'll do a dry-fire run without any ammunition; we then issued them blank adaptors and they did a blank fire; then go through the live-fire exercise."

The three-man crews, operating five-ton Russian trucks, each had a vital role in the mission. With the driver to the right, truck commander in the middle and the armed passenger on the left to offer fire support if needed, the crew made for an effective combination on the range.

Although the soldiers of the 2nd Iraqi MTR aren't new to the military way of life, most of them had to refresh what they already knew to make it to this point in their training.

"We had quite an extensive training program. [The soldiers] all had refresher basic training since all of the soldiers in the regiment were in the former Iraqi Army," Ling said. "We moved on to advanced motorized training and this is the culmination of that phase."

The range itself included multiple obstacles that varied from simulated improved explosive devices to civilian targets. Safety is one thing that is never overlooked in the organization of any live-fire exercise.

"I handled all the safety of the range, said U.S. Army 1st Lt. Andrew Doherty, range officer in charge of the 2nd MTR. "I let the Iraqi officer or noncommissioned officer in charge run the inner workings of the range."

To ensure the best possible result, the Iraqis were given in-depth re-familiarization with the tools they'd be using.

"We made sure the Iraqis knew how to use their weapons and the immediate actions that has to go with it," Doherty said.

"Then we put them through the safety parameters; for instance on that range, they couldn't break a 90 degree plane of the vehicle to make sure they don't hit the civilian population in that general area," he added.

Overall the outcome of the exercise was a success, according to Coalition advisers.

"Shooting a target from a moving vehicle is a difficult task. The more we go through it, the better they'll get," Doherty said. "They did pretty good, and I'm proud."

Iraqi, Coalition forces provide needed goods to citizens

By U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel W. Bailey

22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers from U.S. Task Force 1-128 and the Iraqi Army took a day off from their normal security missions and handed out school supplies, clothes and shoes to the Iraqi populace in a few small villages here.

"It is kind of sad to see kids running around with no shoes," said U.S. Army Pvt. Adam Rodriguez, 2nd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment. "It is stuff you never see back home, so it feels good to help them out."

Task Force 1-128 is comprised of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, and Company A, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, from the Wisconsin Army National Guard and Troop K, 3rd Battalion, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment from the Tennessee Army National Guard.

The Soldiers distributed more than 60 boxes of goods containing more than 100 pairs of shoes, assorted clothes and hundreds of pounds of school supplies such as pens, pencils, notebooks and paper to children and families in the villages of Albouhaswa, Ahmed Hajam and Ja'afaral Jalaby.



An Iraqi soldier (face is blurred for security reasons) with the 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division hands out a new pair of shoes to an Iraqi girl during a joint patrol with Company C, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, near Balad, Iraq.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel W. Bailey

"We tried to go to villages in the low-lying areas that aren't used to the Coalition forces being around," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Craig Bailey, Company C, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment. "You could clearly see when we were giving them the gifts [that] they were shocked, surprised and happy. I heard one woman remark 'thank you, Allah' for the gifts."

Efforts such as this will help to build a relationship between the Iraqi people and Iraqi Security Forces as the citizens look to rebuild a country based on democracy.

"What was important about this mission was that it was a joint mission with the Iraqis," said U.S. Army Sgt. Edward Johnson, 2nd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment. "The Iraqi Army seems very excited by the prospect of a brighter future for this country. Anything we can do to help them in learning how to fight, but also learning how to take care of their own people, is well worth the effort."



U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Craig Bailey, Company C, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, hands out new shoes and clothes to Iraqi children.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel W. Bailey

U.S. Soldiers from Company C started writing home asking for donations to distribute to the Iraqi people when they arrived at Forward Operating Base O'Ryan in December, and have been taken aback by how much support they have received in six months.

"I've been pleasantly surprised by the amount of support we've received from the American population back home," said Johnson. "We have received hundreds of boxes and care packages from churches, schools, veteran's organizations, Boy Scouts and a variety of other individual citizens."

Some packages came from military installations overseas and from people and companies the Soldiers had not even solicited.

"The Boy Scouts of Japan sent us more than 40 boxes of school supplies, as they cleaned out the whole Post Exchange at Camp Zama and Yakota Air Base of these items. Some company in Wisconsin, without us even asking, sent 40 or 50 boxes of brand new shoes, backpacks, school supplies and so on," added Johnson, who lives and works at Camp Zama, Japan, but is a native of Hinkley, Minn.

The Soldiers hope to have more opportunities to dispense needed goods as they only passed out a quarter of the boxes they have.

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi Navy qualifies patrol boat officers in operational exercises

UMM QASR – The Iraqi Navy continued a series of operational exercises June 21 to test the knowledge, skills, and leadership of Iraqi naval officers while in command of patrol boats protecting oil platforms, according to a multinational forces report.

The “Sector Guardian” exercises were designed to measure competency in oil platform defense procedures and sector patrol protocols. The two-hour exercise involved reacting to mock attacks by fast aluminum boats and rigid hull inflatable boats. Coalition and Iraqi naval officials evaluated the performance of the Iraqi executive officers. This is the third series of qualification exercises. The first two were designed to qualify the commanding officers of the patrol boats.

The exercises will continue at regular intervals. The value of the exercises and subsequent qualifications has been demonstrated by the successful sector patrols conducted by the Iraqi Navy.



Patrol boats during Iraqi Navy exercises.

Photo by U.S. Army

Iraqi police detain 67 suspects in cordon and search operations

BAGHDAD – Iraqi police forces joined Coalition Soldiers in a series of cordon and search operations designed to disrupt anti-Iraq force activity in the city June 24, according to a multinational forces report.

Members of the Iraqi Wolf Brigade and 1st Battalion, 4th Iraqi Public Order Brigade participated in the searches. The targeted searches resulted in the detainment of 67 suspects. No injuries or damages were reported.

Terror target seized, attacks averted by Baghdad forces



A suicide vest discovered by Iraqi construction workers in Baghdad.

Photo by U.S. Army

BAGHDAD – Iraqi police officers and Coalition forces captured four terror suspects, seized weapons, foiled a potential suicide bomber, and derailed a roadside bomb attack while conducting combat operations in and

around Baghdad June 25.

Early in the morning, Iraqi police officers found seven AK-47 assault rifles and 200 rounds of ammunition while checking farms in north Baghdad for illegal weapons and stolen cars that could be used as bombs.

In another early morning operation, Task Force Baghdad Soldiers captured four terror suspects, including a high value target, in four separate cordon and search operations conducted in central Baghdad.

Later, at around 2:00 p.m., an Iraqi construction crew found a suicide vest while demolishing a house in central Baghdad. The workers notified a Task Force Baghdad patrol in the area who secured the site. While an explosives ordnance disposal team prepared to destroy the vest, an unknown number of terrorists attacked the patrol with gunfire. The patrol successfully repulsed the attack and the explosives team safely detonated the suicide vest.

“Time is running out on those who seek to support the insurgency,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Clifford Kent, a Task Force Baghdad spokesperson. “The populace has confidence in their army and in their police force – both of which will only get stronger.”

Another unit of U.S. Soldiers discovered a bomb consisting of two anti-personnel mines in central Baghdad. The Soldiers cordoned off the area to prevent anyone from getting hurt and called in a team of explosives experts to safely detonate the bomb. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Iraqi Security Forces seize terror suspect, weapons

BAGHDAD – Iraqi police officers arrested seven terror suspects and seized 500 anti-personnel mines, 60 rocket-propelled grenade rounds and three mortar rounds during a search operation conducted around midnight in the east Baghdad neighborhood of Amin June 26. The Iraqi police also confiscated two trucks the suspects may have been preparing to use as car bombs.

Less than an hour later, Iraqi soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division thwarted a terrorist car bomb attack in central Baghdad.

The soldiers inspected a car that had been parked in the same spot for almost nine hours and found two 125-millimeter rounds and one propane tank under the hood.

After cordoning off the area to keep people away, the Iraqi soldiers called in a team of explosives experts. The explosives team confirmed the bomb was two 125-millimeter rounds and one propane tank.

“Iraqi Security Forces are becoming more independent and more confident in their own capabilities,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Clifford Kent, a Task Force Baghdad spokesperson. “Despite continued attacks on the Iraqi Security Forces and the insurgents’ campaign of intimidation and assassination, Iraqis are stepping forward to serve in the security forces and going on the offensive to take back their country.” (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi Navy charts course towards future with Transition Roadmap

UMM QASR – Iraqi Navy and Coalition naval advisers announced the formal acceptance and recognition of Iraqi naval requirements by the Iraqi Ministry of Defense June 26, according to a multinational forces report.

Captain Adel, Iraqi Navy Operational Commander, and Commodore S.J. Gilmore, Australian Navy, Commander, Task Force-58 signed the Iraqi Navy Transition Roadmap on the *USS Normandy*.



The Iraqi Navy will begin working comprehensive plans for mission readiness. Photo by U.S. Army

The Iraqi Transition Roadmap is a comprehensive plan for the preparation, training, and certification of the Iraqi Navy and Iraqi Marines. It outlines the transition to inte-

grated maritime security operations with the Coalition, and eventual full assumption of the mission. The plan covers both unit and mission readiness requirements for material, training and certification. It integrates sea operations, shore support, boarding and search, and point defense of oil terminals, with an overall command and sustainment program.

"This is a great step forward for the Iraqi Navy," said U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Daniel Bolger, Commander, Coalition Military Assistance Training Team, Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq.

"This Transition Roadmap charts a course toward better defense of Iraqi territorial waters, enhanced protection of oil shipping and terminals, and improved interoperability with Coalition Naval Forces. The Iraqi Navy is making a difference in the northern Arabian Gulf," added Bolger, who attended the signing.

Efforts to recruit additional Iraqi sailors and marine forces continue, as do regular operational exercises designed to train and qualify patrol boat officers.

Iraqi Army uncovers cache

TAJI – Iraqi soldiers responding to a report of a possible improvised explosive device, discovered a weapons cache here June 26, according to a multinational forces report.

Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Mechanized Division did not locate the reported IED, but while investigating the site, uncovered a cache containing five rocket-propelled grenades, two RPG launchers, one homemade launcher, one mortar tube, one light machine gun, and one 75 mm rocket. An Iraqi explosive ordnance disposal team was notified to destroy the materials by conducting a controlled detonation.



Did you know?

The Fourth of July



On this day in 1776, the U.S. Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress, starting the 13 colonies on the road to freedom as a sovereign nation. As always, this most American of holidays will be marked by parades, fireworks and backyard barbecues across the country.

296.5 million - projected number of United States residents on this Fourth of July; back in July 1776, there were about 2.5 million people living in the colonies.

34 million - number of foreign born residents in the U.S. in 2004; they accounted for 12 percent of the nation's total population. Another 30 million Americans were "second-generation," meaning that at least one of their parents was born abroad.

150 million - number of hot dogs (all varieties) expected to be consumed by Americans on the Fourth of July. That is one frankfurter for every two people.

7.3 billion pounds - total production of cattle and calves in Texas in 2004. Chances are that the beef hot dogs, steaks and burgers on your backyard grill came from the Lone Star State, which accounted for over one-sixth of the nation's total production.

\$164.2 million – the value of fireworks imported from China in 2004, representing the bulk of all U.S. fireworks imports (\$172.5 million). U.S. exports of fireworks, by comparison, came to just \$14.3 million in 2004, with Japan purchasing more than any other country (\$4.7 million).

- Information and photos provided by U.S. Census Bureau

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi, U.S. Soldiers nab three suspected bomb makers

ADHAMIYA – Iraqi and American Soldiers searched seven houses in Adhamiya, resulting in the capture of three suspected terrorists June 26.

Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, led the early-morning operation. U.S. military police from the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, assisted the Iraqis with communications and locating the targeted buildings.

“We suspect these men of being bomb makers and we’re going to question them about that,” said an Iraqi Army captain known as “Captain O.”

Residents in the dense neighborhood greeted Iraqi troops warmly, offering them cold water as a respite from the infamous Baghdad summer heat.



Iraqi soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division put terrorist suspects in the back of a truck during cordon and search operations June 26.

Story and photo by U.S. Army Spc. Ben Brody, 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

Iraqi citizens step forward to assist ISF nab terror suspects

BAGHDAD – Iraqi soldiers, acting on tips from Iraqi citizens, captured 21 terror suspects during operations in central and west Baghdad June 27.

Shortly after 5 p.m., an Iraqi citizen walked up to soldiers from the 5th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and told them he had seen men, responsible for an ambush on Coalition forces, hiding in a mosque in central Baghdad.

Task Force Baghdad Soldiers cordoned off the area while the Iraqi Army unit entered the mosque. The Iraqi soldiers found two AK-47 assault rifles and three magazines inside. The source then led the soldiers to a nearby café, where they detained 16 suspected terrorists. The detainees were taken into custody for questioning.

At around 9 p.m., another Iraqi citizen told soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, that men responsible for attacking a Task Force Baghdad patrol were holed up in a house in the Harbiya district of west Baghdad. The Iraqi soldiers raided the house and seized five terror suspects.

“Iraqis continue to come forward to Iraqi and Coalition forces with tips on the whereabouts of insurgents and locations of weapons caches,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Clifford Kent, a Task Force Baghdad spokesperson. “The populace has confidence in their army and in their police force--both of which will only get stronger as time goes on.”

In early-morning combat operations, Iraqi forces from the 3rd Iraqi Public Order Battalion teamed up with Task Force Baghdad Soldiers to capture five suspected terrorists in the Salman Pak neighborhood of East Baghdad.

Coalition forces also raided a target in west Abu Ghraib and took in two more terror suspects. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Suspected high value targets detained by Iraqi commandos

MOSUL – Iraqi police commandos operating a traffic control point here June 27 detained a suspected anti-Iraq force member resembling a documented high value target, according to a multinational forces report.

Officers with the 1-3 Commandos transported the suspect to a secure Coalition facility for questioning and further investigation.

Elsewhere, elements of the 4th Iraqi Public Order Brigade conducted a cordon and search in and around Abu Ghraib and detained two suspected AIF. The identity of one of the suspects was confirmed and appears on the Iraqi Army AIF list. No injuries or damages were reported.

Iraqi police repel AIF attack

SULAYMANIYAH – Iraqi Police officers repelled a coordinated attack by anti-Iraq forces against the Al Qadisya Police Station June 28, according to a multinational forces report.

Officers reacted to the mortar and small arms attack by taking up secure positions and returning fire. A quick reaction force responded to the station’s call for assistance, but also came under attack by small arms fire as the unit approached the station. The AIF quickly fled the area following a brief firefight. A search of the neighborhood failed to produce any suspects involved in the attack.

No injuries or damages were reported.

Iraqi, U.S. Soldiers prevent injuries at pipeline fire site

BAGHDAD – Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers worked together to secure the area around an oil pipeline that caught fire in southwest Baghdad until Iraqi police and firefighters arrived to fight the blaze.

The fire occurred around 3:45 p.m. June 28 after Task Force Baghdad Soldiers manning an observation point nearby heard three loud explosions.

No one was injured in the fire. The Iraqi Ministry of Oil has shutdown the pipeline and is working to assess the damage. The incident is currently under investigation. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi, Coalition forces capture 13 suspected terrorists

BAGHDAD – A unit from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, captured five suspected terrorists June 28 after an Iraqi citizen told the soldiers about an anti-Iraqi forces' safe-house in the Rabi district of north Baghdad.

The Iraqi soldiers investigated the residence at around 8 p.m. and found two rocket-propelled grenade launchers and two RPG rounds in addition to the five suspects. The five terror suspects were taken into custody for questioning.

"The Iraqi people are tiring of the insurgency. Both hot-line and in-person tips have increased greatly," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Clifford Kent, a Task Force Baghdad spokesperson. "A big reason for the increase in tips is because of the Iraqi soldiers taking the lead during raids and operations. The Iraqis will talk to their own soldiers much more readily than to Coalition forces."

In other combat operations June 28, a Task Force Baghdad patrol in south Baghdad struck a roadside bomb at around 10:55 a.m. No one was injured in the attack and no equipment was damaged. After securing the area, the Soldiers noticed detonation cord leading from the bomb and followed the cord to a house about 200 yards away. When the unit arrived at the house, they found seven people acting suspiciously. The Soldiers detained the seven suspects and took them into custody for questioning.

Earlier in the day, a Task Force Baghdad patrol working in the northeast Baghdad district of Thawra also struck a roadside bomb at around 8:50 a.m. No one was injured in the attack, and another Coalition unit operating nearby helped secure the area and search for the attacker. The Soldiers caught a man near the blast site with \$1,000 in sequential U.S. bills and took him into custody for questioning. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)



Iraqi police and Tiger teams surge to repair power lines

BAGHDAD – Officers with the Iraqi Electric Police Security Service provided effective security as Iraqi Ministry of Electricity Tiger teams quickly repaired damaged electrical towers between Samarra and Fallujah June 28, according to multinational forces reports.

Anti-Iraq force elements were harassing the Tiger team repair crews with small arms fire until the Iraqi police forces arrived on the scene and cordoned off the area within two hours. The MoE Tiger teams swiftly repaired the 400 kilovolt towers with restoration of power line service completed at 2100 hours. No injuries were reported.

Iraqi Security Forces collar eight terror suspects

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security Forces detained eight suspected terrorists June 29 in east Baghdad during combined operations.

Seven of the suspects were found with material used for the production and emplacement of roadside bombs. One of the suspects was discovered with false Palestinian documents. The suspects are currently being questioned and are detained in an unspecified location. (2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

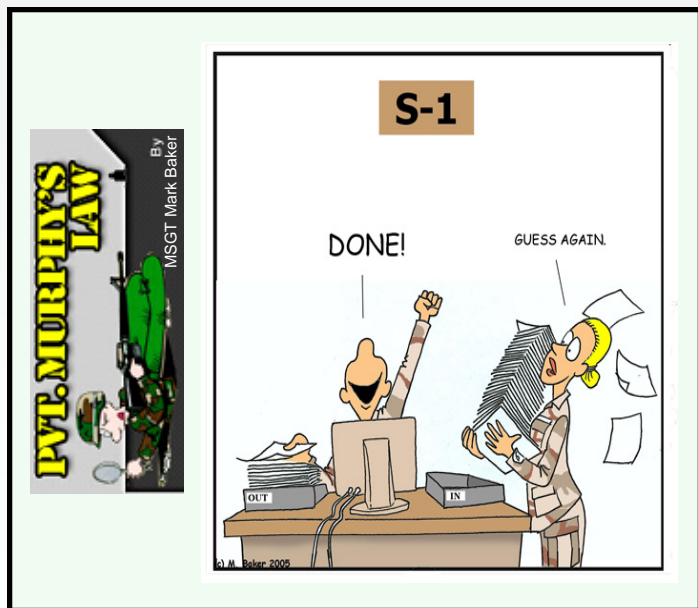
IIF recover weapons, detainees

SAQLAWIYAH – Iraqi and Coalition Soldiers conducted a cordon and search operation east of Saqlawiyah June 29, according to multinational forces reports.

Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Intervention Force and a company of U.S. Marines (1/6 MAR) searched over 200 buildings in the area suspected of insurgent activity. A household census was taken and information pamphlets were distributed to the area residents.

During the search, a radio battalion reported picking up insurgent radio traffic that identified individuals by name. The suspected insurgents were instructed to remain in their hideout. In response, Iraqi and Coalition troops then went about detaining military age men with names similar to the ones disclosed over the radio.

Over 50 weapons, including a Sterling 9mm sub-machine gun, were confiscated during the searches. The two detainees were taken to a nearby holding facility for questioning. No injuries or damages were reported.



Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi Army brigade activates

BAGHDAD – The 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division was activated June 29 during a ceremony at Muthana Airfield shortly after the unit finished its training.

"This is an important day for the people of Iraq," said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. William Webster, Task Force Baghdad commander. "These men before you are all volunteers and have sworn to defend Baghdad."

The ceremony was the culmination of nine weeks of training for the Iraqi soldiers who were trained on a variety of tasks that they will use on the streets of Baghdad, such as reflexive fire, basic marksmanship and clearing rooms.



With the help of two other Iraqi soldiers, Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Fouad Hani Faris (center) and U.S. Army Maj. Gen. William Webster, Task Force Baghdad commander (far right), raise the 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division flag during an activation ceremony June 29 at Muthana Airfield.

Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Raymond Piper, 4th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

Iraqi police graduate 211 from advanced training courses

BAGHDAD – The Iraqi Police Service graduated 211 police officers from advanced and specialty courses at the Adnan Training Facility June 30, as part of the Iraqi government's ongoing effort to train its security forces.

The courses consist of Basic Criminal Investigation with 59 graduates, Advanced Criminal Investigation with 27 graduates, Violent Crime Investigation with 31 graduates, Criminal Intelligence with 37 graduates, Critical Incident Management with 28 graduates, and Mid-Level Management with 29 graduates.

The Basic Criminal Investigation course covers topics such as theft, burglary, arson, robbery, sexual offenses, and homicide investigation. Participants also receive instruction and hands-on training in fingerprinting, photography, tool marks and plaster casting techniques. To date, 1,989 police officers have completed the Basic Criminal Investigation course. The Advanced Criminal Investigation course covers advanced evidence collection techniques and procedures.

The Violent Crime Investigation course introduces participants to investigative techniques to be used in a variety of situations, but particularly in violent crime cases such as

armed robbery, rape and murder. To date, 395 students have graduated from this course.

The Criminal Intelligence course provides training in the planning, collection, analysis and distribution of intelligence information. This course also equips participants with the ability to recognize trends that may have an impact on public safety and security.

The Critical Incident Management course is designed to provide participants with an understanding of and proper application of skills for managing critical incidents. To date, 427 students have graduated from this course.

The Mid-Level Management course is designed for supervisors who are responsible for managing first line supervisors and their assigned personnel. To date, 349 students have graduated this course.

Officers who participated in these courses previously completed either an eight-week basic training course for new recruits or a three-week 'transitional integration program' course designed for prior-service officers.

The police officers report back for continued duty at their respective stations immediately.

Looking back

One year ago in Iraq

The largest and longest-serving unit of U.S. Soldiers in Iraq is heading home after a 15-month deployment.

The Soldiers from the 1st U.S. Armored Division, based in Germany, and the 2nd U.S. Armored Cavalry Regiment, based at Fort Polk, Louisiana, "cased their colors," or folded their military flags ahead of their departure from Iraq during a formal military ceremony on Sunday, July 4, 2004, at Baghdad International Airport.

The ceremony took place on the Fourth of July, the day Americans celebrate their nation's independence, and marked the end of duty in Iraq for some 20,000 U.S. Soldiers whose service was extended for three months to help defeat a militia uprising in the south.

After the ceremony, the 1st U.S. Armored Division commander, Maj. Gen. Martin Dempsey, said it was hard to sum up 15 months of his experience in Iraq.

Dempsey said while his experience has been a series of "three steps forward and one step back," ultimately the Iraqi people have been given a great opportunity.